Nashville, Tennessee JUL 29 2004

Messengers keep name, depart BWA

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INDIANAPOLIS (BP and local reports) — Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting declined to consider a new name for the denomination, pulled out of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), rejected a much-publicized education proposal, and heard a speech from President Bush during their June 15-16 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

President Bush addressed mes-sengers via satellite from the White House in Washington, D.C., reaffirming his pro-life stance and his support for a Federal Marriage Amendment. Touching on the embryonic stem cell debate without mentioning it by name, Bush said that life "is a creation of God, not a commodity to be exploited by man." Bush received one of the loudest ovations for his statement of support for a Federal Marriage Amendment.

"The union of a man and

Messengers elected a new president —
Bobby Welch, pastor of First Church,
Daytona Beach, Fla., and co-creator of the
popular FAITH evangelism program — and
also tackled a handful of controversial issues.

They passed a resolution supporting a Federal Marriage Amendment but declined to take sides in an education controversy that gained steam leading up to the convention. A resolution that called on Southern Baptists to pull their children out of public schools



JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

SBC IN SESSION — Messengers to the first session of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) woman is the most enduring annual meeting in the Indiana Convention Cents in Indianapolis on June 15-16 convene for the human institution, honored and 147th gathering of the SBC, now in its 159th year. (BP photo by Van Payne) encouraged in all cultures and by every religious faith," he said, "and government, by strengthening and protecting ment, by strengthening and protecting marriage, serves the interests of all."

Messengers elected a new president —

Registration totaled 8,600 messengers.

Registration totaled 8,600 messengers.

Registration totaled 8,600 messengers, including 4,709 who registered online. Last year, some 3,000 messengers registered online. Among the items addressed:

• Messengers defeated a motion that would have formed a committee to study when the southern Baptist

changing the Southern Baptist Convention's name. The motion failed 55.4% (1,731 votes) to 44.6% (1,391 votes).

• By a show of ballots messengers overwhelmingly voted to withdraw from

BWA. Theological issues formed the heart of the concerns cited by a BWA study committee composed of SBC leaders, but BWA supporters contended the study committee's charges were false.

• By a vote of 63.5% (3,579 votes) to 36.5% (2,059 votes), messengers passed a recommendation requesting that New Orleans Seminary amend its charter to "name the Southern Baptist Convention as the sole member ... thereby assuring the messengers historic rights and giving the Convention legal immunity." Ten other entities have adopted sole membership, but New Orleans Seminary officials have cited Baptist polity concerns and the uniqueness of Louisiana law in their desire to adopt a different model.

• Welch was elected president by a vote of 79.7% (3,997 votes) to 20.3% (1,020) over Al Jarrell, pastor of Riverside Church in Merry Hill, N.C. Welch announced that he would embark on a 50-state, 25-day bus tour in August and September to encourage a convention-wide effort to win one million people to Christ.

• Gerald Davidson pastor of First Church

million people to Christ.

• Gerald Davidson, pastor of First Church in Arnold, Mo., was elected first vice president, while David Young Hwan Gill, pastor of Concord Korean Church in Martinez, Calif., was elected second vice president.

Lohn J. Yeats editor of Oklahoma's

John L. Yeats, editor of Oklahoma's Baptist Messenger, was elected to another term as recording secretary. James H. (Jim) Wells, director of missions for Tri-County Association in Ozark, Mo., was re-elected registration secretary.

Messengers approved Ken Whitten, pastor of Idlewild Church in Tampa, Fla.,

to preach next year's convention sermon.

• International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin said that SEC missionaries and their Baptist partners reported a record 510,000 baptisms and a near doubling of the number of new churches in 2003.



Directions

Just for the Record

College News

Sunday School Lessons



NEW BELIEVER — Darrien Turner, age 10, is baptized by Lee Whitley, pastor of Faith Church, Washington, Mo., during the Jesus Family Picnic, a Crossover Indiana evangelistic event held June 12 at Garfield Park near downtown Indianapolis. The Crossover event is conducted each year immediately prior to the SBC annual meeting. (BP photo by Brittany Schultze)

That first sense of awe

EDITOR'S *<u>NOTEBOOK</u>*





William H. Perkins Jr. **Editor**

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Postmaster: Send changes of address to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send news, communication, and address changes to The Editor, BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 (601) 968-3800 Fax: (601) 292-3330 E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

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ow! That was the one-word email to The Baptist Record from a first-time messenger to last week's Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Indianapolis. Like this young man, most of us who have had the honor of representing our church as a messenger to the SBC or the Mississippi Baptist Convention can remember our sense of unabashed awe when we experienced our first annual meeting.

Although SBC attendance is currently about one-fifth of its highest total from years past, there are still enough folks there

each year to fill a great big room. It doesn't take long to also fill that great big room with thunderous prayer, praise, and music all dedicated to the worship and adoration

of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Regardless of one's political per-suasion — and there's plenty of convention politics to go around at these annual meetings — the joy of being in the house of the Lord with so many other born-again believers surely rivals some of King David's celebrations in the Old Testament.

Preachers spend months preparing their sermons, and choirs travel great distances just to be a part of the program at the annual meetings. Hours upon hours are spent in rehersals and

practices. Many thousands of dollars and man-hours are invested in the set-up and supervision of the all technical equipment necessary to manage such a large event.

Regrettably, capable and willing Mississippi Baptists get passed over too many times by the people who put together the convention each year. Mississippi Baptists could add a lot to the program but however conspicuous our absence, God is still on his throne and hopefully pleased with what He sees and hears each year as we gather.

In addition to the adoration directed toward our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, Southern Baptists also utilize their annual meeting to attend to the business of the convention. Baptists being Baptists, our business sessions can be interesting (to put it mildly).
This year's business sessions may not

have been as fractious as in past years. The

Every year between Memorial Day and the

4th of July, I get very patriotic as I am reminded of others'

service to our nation. I read

and think about what leaders

of past generations have said

about my responsibilities to

our country. I hear a lot about Roger Williams, a Baptist who

went to Rhode Island for free-dom; the Declaration of Independence adopted in 1776; and this year I have been reminded of speeches by

Ronald Reagan as we cele-brate his life at his death. It is

amazing to me how, like so many other holiday seasons, I

am caught up in the events of

the season only to forget them

as soon as another season arrives. What can I do to

for my attitude and actions as I

relate to God and my country.

Responsibility is defined in Webster's Dictionary as the quality or state of being

accountable, reliable, and/or trustworthy. This is not my

I must accept responsibility

make this year different?



SUPPORTING PLEDGE — The choir and orchestra of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, present a patriotic song June 15 in support of keeping the phrase, "One Nation Under God," as part of the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the presentation, they joined messengers in reciting the Pledge at the opening session of the Southern Baptist Convention June 15-16 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. (BP photo by Matt Miller)

proposal to withdraw the SBC from the Baptist World Alliance passed by a wide mar-gin. New SBC President Bobby Welch, pastor of First Church in Daytona Beach, Fla., handily defeated a last-minute challenger, and he announced his support for a campaign to baptize one million new believers.

One resolution approved by messengers praised the life of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, who passed away just a few weeks ago. Another resolution lamented the secularization of society and called on Christians to "engage the culture by speaking the truth in love."

Resolutions also expressed thanks for the U.S. Armed Forces, urged ratification of an amendment to the United States Constitution that would define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, and encouraged Christians to fulfill their biblical responsibility as American citizens, including voting according to scriptural values.

To their credit, messengers turned down an embarrassing proposed resolution that included a call to withdraw Southern Baptist children from public school systems across

the country. Not only did the resolutions committee decline to recommend it to messengers, a later attempt to attach it to another resolution failed by a significant margin.

The Indianapolis meeting also set a record for the number of motions proposed by mes-sengers. One of the most talked-about proposed motions before the convention was a proposal to study a name change for the convention. It failed 55%-45%. Attempts to change the name of the convention go back at least 30 years, but most messengers seem to be content with the name already in use.

The other motions, some of which were good while others seemed inscrutable, were either referred to applicable SBC entities for study or ruled out of order by the convention chair. The complete list of motions can be found at http://www.sbcbaptistpress.org/bpnews.asp?ID=18491.

All in all, Indianapolis 2004 was a fine meeting. For every year that God grants Southern Baptists the privilege of getting together for worship and business, may we always be as excited as we were at our very first one. To God be the glory!

GUEST OPINION:



Rights and responsibilities

By Wayne Edwards Associational Missions Director Lauderdale Association, Meridian

word of choice. I prefer to think in terms of privileges, opportunities, or rights, instead of responsibilities. As I reflect on our nation's birthday, will I choose responsibility or continue to look for other words? If I am serious about responsibility, what does this mean to me?

Jesus challenged us with these words, "give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:21 HCSB). Jesus had been asked a political question: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Matthew 22:17 HCSB). His response to them was in the

form of a question: Whose image is on the coin? I believe He implied another question: Whose image is on us (Genesis 1:27)? This episode amazed the people of that day and seriously challenges me to examine my loyalties. Is it possible that Jesus meant for me to honor and obey the rulers but to realize that Caesar is not God and did not create me? Could He have meant that the claims of both were not in conflict with each other but are valid authorities to be obeyed? Is it possible that the best citizen is the one who worships God with integrity, intensity, and involvement? I

do have a responsibility to my nation but my greater responsibility is to my Creator and Savior. God is our supreme King and it is to Him that I owe my ultimate allegiance.

How can I effectively serve God and our nation at the same time? I will commit to learning, understanding, and applying the teaching of Biblical truths to decisions that I make regarding my nation. I will be a better citizen by being an informed voter and expressing my opinions in kindness and love to all our elected officials. I will pray for our nation and our leaders. I will rely on our government to do the things it was created to do and I will, as a believer, do the things God has commanded me to do. I will be involved in government but never at the expense of Christian standards and principles. These are some of the responsibilities that I believe will make a difference in my life.

Now the question for you is, what do you need to do?

NOBTS directed to adopt sole membership

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Indianapolis passed a recommendation June 15 asking New Orleans Seminary trustees to amend the seminary charter and "name the Southern Baptist Convention as the sole member."

The recommendation, which came from the **Executive Commit**tee, passed by a vote of 63.5% (3,579 votes) to 36.5% (2,059 votes). Sole membership seeks to clarify, in legal language, that the convention owns

all of its entities. The other five seminaries previously have adopted sole membership, as have the North **American**

Mission Board, International Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources, the Ethics Religious Liberty Commission and the Annuity Board. In each instance, SBC messengers approved the respective charter change.

New Orleans Seminary representatives had held out, saying that sole membership violates Baptist polity and also is incompatible with Louisiana law.

Southern Baptist Convention lawyer Jim Guenther told messengers he believes sole membership to be compatible with Louisiana law and its adoption would prevent New Orleans Seminary from distancing itself from the convention in the future, much like Baylor University did with the Baptist General Convention of Texas years ago.

Guenther added that sole membership in Missouri likely would have prevented five

Fish addresses SBC

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Southern Baptist evangelist Roy J. Fish charged Southern Baptists to turn a convention primarily designed for business matters into a spark that will breathe new life into the convention, penetrating the churches like a laser beam. Fish delivered a Kingdom Challenge theme interpretation to messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. "Never have we faced such challenges, and we must obey God's call of forward march." We cannot afford to fail Him now. Let us once again, for His glory, fill this country with astonishment at what a committed people can do," Fish urged. Relating the story of the young French soldier who was ordered by a fleeing officer to sound retreat, Fish said the young man had replied: "Sir, I cannot blow a retreat Ldo not know how. But Lean blow a for

to sound retreat, Fish said the young man had replied: "Sir, I cannot blow a retreat, I do not know how. But I can blow a forward march that would make the dead fall in line." Fish occupies the Scarborough Chair of Evangelism, the "Chair of Fire," at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, where he has taught for nearly 40 years. He told listeners that though the conservative resurgence was much needed in the SBC, "we must guard against allowing this resurgence movement to degenerate into a lifeless orthodoxy, our heads full, but our hearts so empty — believing so much, while experiencing so little." Recalling a time in Scripture when it was recorded that "Jesus was in the house," Fish asked messengers, "When was the last time it was noised about that Jesus was in your church?"

entities from attempting to break away from the Missouri Baptist Convention.

This recommendation is not rooted in suspicion," Guenther said. "The Executive Committee members do not believe this seminary board would ever flee the convention. I personally believe and the Executive [Committee]

members believe that the present trustees of that seminary are honorable, loyal Southern Baptists, but the time to close the barn door is before there are any horses to get out. The time to act is when the messengers and the trustees share a common commitment."

New Orleans Seminary trustees

had voted in April to offer two options to messengers to the 2005 SBC annual meeting in Nashville — one that would include sole membership language and another that would not include sole membership language but would affirm the convention as the owner.

Kelley

SBC Executive Committee voted in February to ask NOBTS trustees to name the SBC as sole member and again June 14 to bring the matter to messengers in Indianapolis.

Kelley asked the messengers June 15 to vote against the recommendation, thus giving the seminary another year.

"You have not yet been given all the facts and the other side of the sole membership story, and I have not been given enough time to explain the details today," Kelley said.
"The bottom line is that Louisiana law is different than that of other [entities'] states,

and that difference makes sole membership more harmful than helpful for the SBC.

Kelley also argued that, "This year's vote is not the one that matters," emphasizing that **NOBTS** would bring the two options (sole membership and an NOBTS alternative) for messengers to consider in 2005. He gave his assurance that if they chose to adopt sole membership at that time, "it will be done."

Despite Kelley's impassioned plea, Southern Baptists gathered in Indianapolis rejected his proposal by nearly 2 to 1, choosing instead to approve the Executive Committee's recommendation regarding sole membership.

In February 2004, Kelley said that if convention messengers ask for the adoption of sole membership, "the discussion's over." However, in response to the messengers' vote, Kelley stated, "The messengers did not vote on sole membership.

"They voted on a request for our trustees to consider sole membership and our trustees will consider it very carefully. However, next year will be the actual vote on a charter change. The messengers heard this before they voted. The result of that vote will be implemented immediately as I promised."

Gary Smith, pastor of Fielder Road Church, Arlington, Texas and outgoing chairman of the Executive Committee, dis-

agreed with Kelley's remarks.
"There is no ambiguity. The messengers asked NOBTS trustees to name the convention as sole member in the seminary charter and Dr. Kelley has repeatedly given assurances that if the convention made that request he would respond accordingly.

The approved recommendation specifically asks New Orleans Seminary trustees to adopt sole membership at their "October, 2004, meeting" by amending the seminary's charter to "name the Southern Baptist Convention as the sole member... thereby assuring the messengers' historic rights and giving the Convention legal immunity" and specify the convention's right to:

elect and remove the seminary's trustees;

"approve any amendment of the charter adopted by the board trustees;

 "approve any merger, consolidation or dissolution, the creation of a subsidiary, or any change in the corporation's charter; and

• "approve the sale, lease or other disposition of all, or substantially all, of the corporation's assets."

Guenther

The recommendation also asks that the new charter "confirm the seminary board's right to otherwise govern the institu-



BAPTISTS

THE **SECOND** FRONT PAGE



tion; and be in language which the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, in its February 2005 meeting, will recommend to the 2005 for approval, and in a form ready to be filed with the Louisiana Secretary of State."

Tommy French, chairman of the New Orleans trustees and a messenger from Louisiana, spoke from the floor and asked messengers to vote against the recommendation. French asserted that under Louisiana law, sole membership would not allow the convention and New Orleans trustees to share in the governance powers.

Guenther, though, said that sole membership is compatible with Louisiana law. "As your lawyers, we disagree with New Orleans Seminary's arguments], and Louisiana law firm disagrees," he said. "Both law firms are confident that sole membership works in Louisiana."

Guenther also discounted arguments that sole membership would result in the Executive Committee having more power.

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Southern Baptist youths meet and exceed their goal for the nationwide sexual abstinence campaign, True Love Waits. Several hundred teenagers from seven states create a display of over 102,000 cards outside the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

Jenny Kay Graham, member of First Church, Pascagoula, will sing soprano for the Baptist Festival Singers, whose summer tour includes concerts in several cities in Germany and Switzerland, and at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

The highest rung of achievement on the ladder of standards, the First Magnitude, is awarded to the Mississippi College Baptist Student Union at the recent student retreat at Ridgecrest Assembly in North Carolina.

Looking back

newspaper will not pon July 1. The deadlinews items to be published july 8 issue will be The deadline for advenents to be published july 8 issue will be June For more to be published. For more information, contact Editor William H. Perkin Jr. at (601) 292-3218 or toll free outside Jackson (800 748-1651, ext. 218. E-mail wperkins@mbcb.org.

FMA vote slated for mid-July

WASHINGTON (ABP) The U.S. Senate's Republican leadership has scheduled a mid-July vote on a proposed amend-ment to ban gay marriage nationwide, despite objections by Democratic lawmakers.

group of senators announced June 18 that Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) has scheduled debate on the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) to begin the week of July 12. The amendment would outlaw marriage for same-sex couples in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention's 2004 meeting annual Indianapolis adopted a resolution June 16 supporting the Federal Marriage Amendment.

The amendment's supporters have said they do not intend for it to outlaw state-enacted "civil unions" or other legal relationships that offer many of the same benefits of marriage to same-sex couples, but gayrights supporters and many mainstream legal scholars have criticized the amendment in that regard, saying its language was vague enough that some judges could easily interpret it to ban civil unions and similar arrangements - even when enacted by state legislatures.

Democrats have pushed for the vote to be postponed until after the November elections, particularly because a vote against the amendment could harm Southern Democratic senators up for re-election in vulnerable districts.

If Frist carries through with his promise, then Democrats will be forced to resort to parliamentary tools - such as filibustering — to prevent a vote on the amendment.

At least one Religious Right group attempted to rally its supporters to pre-empt such a move. In an e-mail "action alert" sent out June 17, the Christian Coalition of America urged activists to contact their senators to ask them to agree to a vote.

"If the Senate is buried in petitions, calls, letters, and faxes, they will not be able to ignore the will of the people they have sworn to represent," the message said. "Force your senators to take a public position [on the amendment] before voters go to the polls this fall."

Pastors' Conf. hears, 'Jesus Came Preaching'

INDIANAPOLIS (Editor's Network and local reports) -Southern Baptist leaders and standouts came preaching dur-ing the 2004 Pastors' Conference on June 13-14 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Following the theme, Jesus Came Preaching, pastors, professors, and other ministry leaders developed sermons around Jesus' directives.

Many speakers also high-lighted then-Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) presidential nominee Bobby Welch's goal for Southern Baptists to baptize one million people in one year. Welch, pastor of First Church, Daytona Beach, Fla., and co-creator of the popular FAITH evangelism program, was elected SBC president the following day.

Mississippi music evangelist Luke Garrett sang at the

of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, reminded Southern Baptists that since the conservative resurgence in 1979 they have only baptized 400,000 people, "and we have baptized mostly our own, many of them for the second time. Many of us are guilty of the infant baptism we used to criticize everyone else for. (This is happening) because we no longer believe in the exclusivity of salvation in Christ.

Preaching from Matthew 7:13-29, Patterson said the doctrine of the exclusivity of Jesus Christ "is the most hated doctrine in all the world today," but he challenged Southern Baptists to stick to it. "Let us preach to make men free. God help us if we preach anything else but Jesus and Him alone for salvation."

Jerry Vines, pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla., preached from 1 Timothy



PREACHING THE WORD — Bible teacher Voddie Baucham of Spring, Texas, speaks during session four of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, June 13-14, in the Indiana Convention Center Paige Patterson, president prior to the SBC annual meeting, June 15-16. (BP photo by Matt Miller)

6 with the theme, Old Preachers Never Die. "Our job is not to dilute the message, delete the message, dissect the message, doctor the message or dumb down the message," he said. "Our job is to deliver and to declare the message of the living God," he said.

Ted Traylor, president of the 2004 Pastors'

Conference, found himself preaching during a slot reserved for Adrian Rogers, Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church in Cordova, Tenn., was not released by his physician to preach following heart bypass surgery on March 16.

Preaching from Luke 4:16-44, Traylor shared thoughts about the authority, anointing and announcement of the "peerless preacher." "There are some people outside of our normal paths that we must begin to do a better job reaching," Traylor said, noting three specific groups — various ethnic groups, teenagers, and twentysomethings.

Something must change with the way we are pronouncing the gospel, so we can announce to them that Jesus is Lord."

Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., said teaching, preaching, and the practice of a biblical theology of stewardship are missing in most Southern Baptist churches today. Drawing from the example of David in 1 Chronicles 29 Floyd encouraged pastors to be courageous spiritual leaders who put biblical theological stewardship into practice. Only then, Floyd said, will God provide "super-

natural contagious results."

Another Arkansas pastor, Bryan Smith of First Church of Van Buren, said pastors should never forget the primary reason of their call — preach the Word. Smith, who was vice president of the 2004 SBC Pastors' Conference, said the same persecution under Saul that dispersed the early church is evident today.

He said 250 million believers live in communities under threat of persecution, prison, or death. "These are not just heroes or statistics but they are our family. It should be a joy and a blessing to suffer for Jesus Christ.

Eddie Echarri, a former prisoner who now directs community outreach for Olive Church in Pensacola, Fla., urged church leaders to reach out to those who need Jesus. "Broken spirits and broken hearts are

showing up at your church," he said.
Preaching from Luke 19:11-26, Paul Negrut, pastor of Emmanuel Church in Oradea, Romania, said service for Jesus involves calling, vision, passion, character and reward. "We are working for the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the One who is coming soon and coming with a great reward.

WMU gathers for annual meeting in Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS (Editor's Network and local reports) Missionaries, Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) leaders, and others explored what it means to be Christfollowers during WMU's 2004 annual meeting June 13-14 in Indianapolis.

Through music, dramatic presentations, videos, testimonies, and inspirational messages from North American and international missionaries. the 850 women registered were challenged to carry the message of Christ and disciple new believers in their communities, throughout the United States and around the world.

No Mississippi Baptists were included on the program where home states were listed.

"All true followers of Christ desire more than anything else to be like Christ," WMU President Janet Janet Hoffman told attendees. "To imitate Christ, one must be intimate with Christ, and that is nourished through daily prayer and study of His Word.

Christian believers who are like Christ are more interested in being than doing, but those who love Christ intimately begin to serve Him by serving others, she added.

"Following Christ is love in action," she said. "In loving, we are most like Him because Christ is Love. Love for each other will prove to the world that we are His." She said loving as Christ loves means loving extravagantly and unconditionally. "Will our imitation of Christ inspire others to follow Him?" she asked.

Missionaries shared their testimonies during the two days, explaining how they've sought to follow Christ. Native American Alpha Goombi shared how she wallowed in pain from abuse as a child and low self-esteem until one day she hit bottom. She decided to accept the invitation of a missionary who had invited her to attend a Baptist Indian mission.

When the invitation was extended, "I ran forward and gave my heart to Jesus and I have never been the same," she recalled. "In me, God saw a princess.'

Today, she serves as a missionary in Omaha, Neb. She concluded her presentation using Native American sign language to interpret the Lord's Prayer.

Harriet and Paul Lawrence, International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries to North Africa and the Middle East, told of the danger and unique challenges of serving in Gaza and the West Bank of Jordan. They spoke on near misses by both Israeli and Palestinian bombs. "We love the Lord too much to fear following Him," said Harriet.

"In spite of the hardship, it is worth it to follow Him," added Paul.

Barbara and Harry Bush, IMB missionaries to South Asia, told of "equipping God's leaders" by providing biblical training to Christian leaders in nine nations. About 1,600 people have received such leadership training, resulting in 16,000 baptisms and 285 new churches.



OLYMPIC EFFORT — Beth Ann Williams, wearing her collection of Olympics pins June 13 during an opening session of the annual Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) meeting, talks about what ministry was like at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, where as a missionary, she coordinated events sponsored by the SBC's North American Mission Board. (BP photo by John Swain)

MOOD RING

Many of you will remember a fad from the '60's called the mood ring. Well, the mood ring is back! In fact, it may never have gone away, but it is once again back in popularity. You know the mood ring; it's that stone or strange substance that would change colors from blue, to black, to gray, to green, etc. You slip the ring on your finger and watch as it changes colors and supposedly reveals what mood you are in. Though it was interesting to play with, I never put much stock in what the mood ring would either reveal about me or others! Well, the ring is back and my oldest little granddaughter has one. From time to time she will show me how it changes colors and then she gives me the interpretation of

what is taking place.

Recently, I was sitting beside my granddaughter in church one Sunday morning. I wasn't paying attention to her, but I had my arm draped around the chair where she was seated beside me. She took hold of my hand and at first I was not aware of what she was doing, but she had taken her mood ring off of her finger and was sliding it onto my middle finger. As we sat there in church, the ring changed colors and turned gray. She leaned over and whispered to me, "That means you are nervous." I raised my eyebrows and nod-



Directi

Iim Futral, executive director-treasurer Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

ded. I did not think that I was nervous, but I could have been. That morning my oldest grandson had been baptized. Only a few weeks before he had invited Jesus into his heart and was confident that he knew the Lord and wanted to follow Him in baptism. It was a wonderful experience and I suppose the ring knew more about me than what I knew about myself!

As the service progressed and I had a moment here and there to reflect on it, I wondered if it wouldn't be a good idea to issue mood rings out to people as they came into the church. I mean if these things really work, can you imagine the unveiling of hearts that would take place if we were required to wear the color that reflected our moods? Not all, but most of the folks I know who come into the church arrive well dressed and with a smile, or a close facsimile of one, to begin their Sunday School or church experience. Just beneath that smile and covered by nice clothes may be a totally different mood and the ring could announce that and put everybody on guard.

Some folks are mad. They come to church that way. They may be mad at somebody at the church, or their kids, or possibly their spouse may have helped create the condition on the way to church. Therefore, they come seething inside as they smile It is amazing! outside. Occasionally, you are able to pick up on their mood by a word here or there that is more revealing than they intended for it to be. You simply learn to step lightly and handle them gently because they are just mad!

For others, the mood ring might reveal that they are sad. Can you imagine all of the grief experiences that people go through from one Sunday to the next — death, the loss of friends or loved ones, the grief of losing a job, or, maybe going through an experience

and losing self-esteem. From one Sunday to the next it happens over and over to one person after another. Losses occur

and the grief is real.

Some folks are **glad**. They can hardly contain their gladness.

Good things are happening in their life and they just bounce along with the blessings pouring out through their disposition. In Acts 3, the man who was crippled was healed and he got up and went running through the temple praising God. His joy could not be contained.

I doubt that we will be passing out mood rings at churches across the state, but for most of us these and many other moods crop up within us and pass from one moment to the next. All are possible and most may be appropriate from time to time and in the midst of it all the Lord comes to meet our needs. Isn't it wonderful to know a God who cares so much about us that He not only meets our physical and spiritual needs, but He knows, cares, and can help us with our emotional (moody) needs.

God bless you with a wonderful mood this week! Your mood will not only change your mood ring, but it can be a blessing to someone else!

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

Senate OKs protection for sex minorities

WASHINGTON (ABP) -By a large majority, the Senate voted June 15 to extend federal hate-crimes protections to sexual minorities. Senators voted 65-33 to add crimes based on a victim's real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability to the list of hate crimes that federal law-enforcement agents can investigate or assist local officials in investigating.

The move came as an amendment to the bill appro-Department of Defense funding for 2005. It was added by its sponsors in an effort to attach it to legislation that would be likely to pass, because the subject of adding sexual orientations to hate-crimes statutes has proven divisive in the past. "It is no secret that with all the turmoil on the issue of gays and lesbians and their rights in this country, there are very strong feelings on both sides of this issue," said Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.), while introducing the amendment on the Senate floor. "I believe in gay rights, but I also believe it is not right in the case of marriage for a few liberals to dictate to the rest of the country a new standard."

Gordon also added, "Notwithstanding that, I have always felt before you get to marriage, you ought to get rid of hate." The appropriations bill to which the hate-crimes amendment was attached, S. 2400, is still under consideration by the Senate.

Annuity Board to change name, expand services

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) - Messengers to the 2004 Southern Baptist Convention June 15-16 in Indianapolis approved recommendations to change the Annuity Board's name to GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and to expand its products and services to evangelical ministry organizations outside the SBC.

The recommendations were part of the SBC Executive Committee report delivered to messengers on June 15.

recommendation to change the board's name, its articles of incorporation, and SBC bylaws require two successive votes of the convention, but a provision authorizing the board to do business as GuideStone for one year pending a second affirmative vote at the 2005 Convention was included and approved. The same process was used when LifeWay Christian Resources changed its name a few years ago from the Baptist Sunday School Board.

"We are grateful for the support of the messengers today," Annuity Board President O.S. Hawkins said. "The name change and the opportunity to expand the scope of our work will further undergird our efforts to enhance the financial security of the pastor at the crossroads and other Southern Baptist

ministers and employees we serve. Prior to the approval of the recom-mendation extending the board's services to other evangelical organizations, Mitchell Jackson of Sikeston, Mo., raised questions about the value of extending the board's products and services to non-Southern Baptist organizations and the limited information available about the eligibility guidelines.

Hawkins responded by saying the eli-gibility guidelines are listed in the "New Name, Expanded Ministry" brochure available at the board's exhibit, which the Southern Baptist Convention.'

states the board will "work with evangelical church and ministry organizations that are eligible to participate in a church plan and are not in conflict with

GuideStone FINANCIAL RESOURCES

> In addition, the board's trustees will approve the guidelines and will be involved in determining the evangelical ministries to be served. Among the factors to be considered as a part of the guidelines are:

of the Southern Baptist Convention

 A belief that Scripture has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.

 A belief in the local church, with the primary task of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

 A belief in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Even with the opportunities to service non-Southern Baptist entities, legal documents will require that the majority of participants served by GuideStone Financial Resources be Southern Baptists and all trustees must be members of

Southern Baptist churches and elected by the SBC as they have been since the

board's founding in 1918. "This proposed ministry expansion will enable us to first and foremost keep our focus on preparing our ministers for a secure financial future in addition to maintaining our high-touch customer service, competitive fee structure and enhance the buying power for risk manage-

ment products," Hawkins said. "The continued growth of the Annuity Board's asset base is vitally important to the overall health of our organization and our ability to be an advocate for our participants," he added. "We have three opportunities to enlarge our ministry — retention,

growth and expansion.
"We work diligently to retain our existing clients and assets. Growth is becoming more challenging since we have saturated

the Southern Baptist market, but the third opportunity is through expansion. Expanding our markets will allow us to provide a larger client base and ultimately more assets under management," Hawkins said.

"Market expansion will also benefit our life, medical and disability programs by giving us greater buying power and enhancing the board's ability to provide

more competitive products and services."

Even though the board will offer its retirement, investment and insurance products and services to other evangelical organization, its relief ministry to retirees will remain exclusive to Southern Baptist

ministers and denominational employees.

Annuity Board trustees initially approved the recommendations July 30, 2002, and then the SBC Executive Committee gave its approval Sept. 23.

BAPTISTS

Just for the Record

Lees a
Hayes and
Craig Bullock
(pictured) of
West Corinth
Church,
Corinth,
recently participated in

Bullock C h u r c h, Associational, and State Drills. This was Hayes'

second and Bullock's fourth year. Pictured (from left) are Harold King, pastor, Hayes, and leader Linda Cooley.

East Fork Church, Amite County, held a Confederate Memorial Day Service sponsored by the Adult II Discipleship Training Class in honor of 15 Confederate Veterans buried in the church cemetery. Many in attendance were descendents of those honored. Bryce Wilkinson and Greg Barron presented a skit. Paul G. Cain is pastor.

Calvary Chapel, Parchman, commissioned Erik and Elena Brewer to serve in Moldova in an English teaching and church planting ministry. They served in the international and Hispanic ministry of Calvary Chapel, and Erik served as youth minister.

Trey Collier, Cliff Mapp, and Raymond Collier of McLaurin First Church, Hattiesburg, received superior ratings in State Bible Drill. Trey Collier and Mapp received a trophy for three years participation. This was Raymond Collier's first year. Pictured (from left) are Trey, Cliff, Raymond, and Ann Mapp, instructor. Roy Moody is pastor.

Vaiden Church, Vaiden, held VBS May 31-June 4 averaging 128 each day. The participants enjoyed visiting Lava Lava Island in the recently completed fellowship hall. Graduation was held June 4 at 7 p.m. Anna Frances Havens is the youth director and VBS director.

The children and youth of Fellowship Church, Starkville, were treated to a day of flying, fun, and fellowship June 5. The event was scheduled by Bill and Fay Owen. Bill Owen and David Johnson, pilots, provided the 20 young people plane rides. Following the morning rides, the young people and others were invited to the Owens'

home for a cookout, games, and fellowship. More than 50 people joined in the day of activities.

Twenty-three mis-sionaries flew to Lima, Peru, January 2, for a ten day Mission Trip. Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson, was the host church. Other churches represented were Shiloh Church, Port Gibson; First Church, Vicksburg; Hermanville Church, Hermanville. Joe Mitchell, Natchez, was the mission coordinator. The objective of the trip was to aid two orphanages. Much needed medical supplies and other physical necessities were brought by team members to leave in Lima for the orphanages benefit.



Wilkinson and Barron



Children and Youth of Fellowship Church, Starkville



Vaiden Church VBS, Vaiden



Harold King, pastor; Leesa Hayes, and Linda Cooley

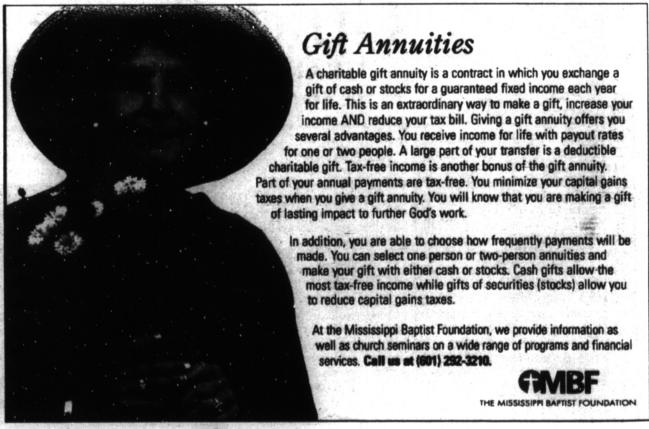


McLaurin Bible Drill Participants, Hattiesburg



Mission Trip Participants of Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson





JUST FOR THE RECORD

Tylertown, is undergoing construction of an arrival hood for the existing family life center. It will eventually be part of a colonnade that will connect the family life center, sanctuary, educational building, and a planned facility to house a new nursery, classrooms, and a music suite. Pictured are Brandon Myers, Wayne Meyers, contractor and church member, Michael W. Glenn, pastor, and J.L. Sumrall.

Auburn Church, Tupelo, celebrated Mother's Day and Parent-Child Dedication May 9 during morning worship. Terry Ramey, youth minister, presented the charge to the church and parents. Pictured (from left) are Jared and Kristi Bounds with Ally Grace, Chris and Kimberly Deaton with Brice, Kirk and Pam Tharp with Michael and Mitchell, James and Betsey O'Neal with Ben, Erica Keltz with North, Jimmy and Tracy Weeks with Emma Claire.

East Fork Church, Amite County, recently participated in Bible Drill. Pictured (from left, Front) are Will Barron, Tyler Wilkinson, Marion Oberhauser, Haley Newman, and leaders (back) Faye Cockerham, Rana Oberhauser, and Teresa Newman. Haley Newman went to State Drill.

The Senior Adults (pictured) of **Crestwood Church, Booneville, recently held their** annual birthday party. Jackie Spencer is pastor.

Meadow Grove Church, Brandon, held children's Bible Drill recently. Pictured (from left) are Andrew Wilson, Jayme Shoemaker, Lindsey Thornton, Kelsey Pettus, Amy Ray, Josh May, and leader Jane Wilson (back). Andrew Wilson, Kelsey Pettus, and Amy Ray also participated in Associational and State Drills.



B. Myers, W. Meyers, Glenn, pastor; and Sumrall



Oak Grove Bible Drill Participants, Jeff Davis County



Auburn Church Baby Dedication, Tupelo

Children and youth of Walnut Church, Benton-Tippah Association, recently participated in State Bible Drill, Tupelo. Pictured (from left) are Rebecca Robinson, Olivia Robinson, Liza Hudspeth, Dylan Wright, Jennalee Dollar, Matthew Voyles, and Crystal Marbry.

Oak Grove Church, Jeff Davis County, recently participated in youth Bible Drills. Three participated in State Drill. Pictured (from left, front) are Marissa Farham, Samantha Creel, Sarah Lee, Jacob Farnham, (back) leader Kimberly Delorenze, youth director Rose Bruce, Kyla Creel, and Brent Parker, pastor.





Walnut Bible Drill Participants, Benton-Tippah Association



Meadow Grove Bible Drill Participants, Brandon



Senior Adults of Crestwood Church, Booneville



East Fork Bible Drill Participants, Amite County



J.E. Barnes Jr., passes away June 3

John E. Barnes Ir. passed away June 3. Funeral services were held June 5 at Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, with interment following at Roseland Park Cemetery, Barnes was born in Pratt City,

Ala., and reared in Mobile, Ala. He was ordained at Dauphin Way Church, Mobile. He attended the University

Military School of Mobile; Samford University, Birmingham.; Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and he received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity from Mississippi College, Clinton.

Pastorates included First Church, Atmore, Ala.; First Church, West Point; Main Street Church; and he also served as interim pastor of Oyster Bay Church, Gulf Shores, Ala.

Denominational during his 37 years at Main Street Church include d President, Mississippi Baptist Convention, two terms; Education President, Mississippi Commission, Baptist Convention; Trustee, The Baptist Children's Village; Chairman, Board of Directors, Southern Baptist Hospitals; President, Sunday School Board; Chairman, Southern Baptist Committee on Boards; and President, Trustees, William Carey College. Survivors include his wife,

Marion Stall Barnes; two daughters Marilyn Barnes Green and Betty Barnes Clayton; a son, John E. Barnes, III; eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

New Orleans Theological Seminary (NOBTS) held commencement exercises May 14 for Leavell College and May 15 for the Graduate School. The following have Mississippi ties.

Eight students received doctoral degrees. Pictured (from left) are John Mark Byrd of Hattiesburg, pastor of Calvary Church, Waynesboro, receiving the doctor of ministry degree; Earnest Franklin "Frankie" Clark of Waynesboro, pastor of First Church, Taylorsville, receiving the doctor of ministry degree; Kevin Wynn Dobbs of Piedmont, Ala., associate pastor of Brandon Church, Brandon, receiving the doctor of ministry degree; James Dawson "J.D." Simpson of Pineville, La., area director of First Priority, Hattiesburg, receiving the doctor of educational ministry degree; NOBTS President Charles S. Kelley Jr.; Richard Keith Manuel of Ocean Springs, pastor of Calvary Church, New Orleans, La., receiving the doctor of philosophy degree in preaching; Viktor Roudkovski Almaty, of Kazakstan, former pastor of Olive Church, Lumberton, receiving the doctor of philoso-phy degree in Biblical Studies; Jake Roudkovski of Ponchatoula, pastor at First Church,

Ponchatoula, receiving the doc-tor of philosophy degree; and Ruben Raquel Honolulu, Hawaii, associate pastor of Springdale Church, Ripley, receiving the doctor of ministry degree. The following

18 also received degrees from the graduate school: David Marshall

Addy, MACE, Union, Temple Church, Moss Point; Jason Lamar Brooks, MACE, Grenada, First Church; Susanna Capri Posey Brooks, MAMFC, Philadelphia, First Church; James Richard Butler, MDIV, Corinth, First Church; Jason Mounce Davis, MDIV, Ecru, Ecru Church; Larry W. LeBlanc, MDIV, Hattiesburg, Seminary Church, Seminary; Matthew MDIV, Edward Loving, Brandon, Adaton Church, Starkville; Scott Randal Maxwell, MACE, Vicksburg, Woodlawn Church; Justin Frank McAlpin, MDIV, Brandon, First Church; Deanna Nicole Ready Miller, MAMFC, Brookhaven, First Church, Covington; Robert



New Orleans Seminary doctorial recipients

L. Purvis, MDIV, Enterprise, Enterprise Church; Rebecca Joy Scarbrough, MACE, Meridian, First Church; Lindsay Curry Skipper, MACE, Petal, Carterville Church; Joshua Aaron Smith, MAMFC, Lyman, First Church; Barry Grant Stegall, MDIV Pontotoc, First Church, Crystal Springs; Anglia A. Turner, MDIV, Inverness, Beulah Church; Stephanie Hope MACE, Ruleville, Weaver,

Ruleville Church; and Arthur Joseph Williams, Jr., MACE, Clinton, Wildwood Church.

The following six graduated from Leavell College: Randal Keith Dunn, McComb; Raymond Eugene Edwards, Talmadge Shane Biloxi; Freeman, Meridian; Helen Vouise Williams Holms, Louise Williams Holms, Tylertown; Jeffrey Reed Kidd, Tupelo; and Michael Andrew "Mike" Mohler, Poplarville.

STAFF CHANGES

Church, Columbia, Goss



alled Donovan McComb as a bivocational Minister of Music effective since April. Mark McArthur is pastor.

McComb Mt. Olive Church, Meridian, called Danny Davis as pastor March 14. He began full time June 6.

First Church, Greenville, called James L. Nichols as pastor effective June 1. Nichols, an Amory native, from Pine Crest comes Church, Gainesville, Ga. He graduated from Georgia State University and NOBTS. He is currently attending Beeson Divinity School, Samford Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

Covington-Jefferson Davis Association has called Nathan L. Barber, Sr. as Associational Missions Director effective July 1.

building on a Legacy



Our name is changing!

The Annuity Board's name is changing to GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Why?

When the Annuity Board was chartered in 1918 as the Commission on Ministerial Relief and Annuity, our name reflected our original mission: to provide financial relief to retiring pastors who, after a lifetime of supporting others, could not support themselves.

Over the years our mission has grown and our name no longer effectively describes the depth and variety of products and services available to our participants. Today, we offer a full range of financial services including retirement, life and health plans and investment products.

What does it mean?

We believe the new name, GuideStone Financial Resources, will help guide our future while enabling us to build on our legacy of TRUST, SERVICE, VALUES, EXPERIENCE and STRENGTH.

Our name is changing, but our focus will remain the same...Serving those who serve the Lord.



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This announcement is neither an offer nor a solicitation of an offer to buy. The offer is made by prospectus only. For more information about this bond issue, obtain a prospectus, which describes all of the particulars of this undertaking. Read it carefully before you invest or send money. All bonds are offered at face value, subject to prior sale.



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UST FOR THE RECORD

Twenty-two Acteens of First Church, New Albany, received recognition in a service April 28. Acteens leaders are Jane Goode, Joy McCullough, and Lynn Still. Malcolm Pinion is pastor.

Vera Byrd of the Dorcas Class at First Church, Laurel, was recognized recently for 28 years perfect attendance in Sunday School. Gay Morgan presented her with flowers.

Briar Hill Church, Florence, recently gave a retirement reception for church secretary Evelyn Armstrong. She served the church for a total of 24 years. Pictured (from left) are Jason Lee, Doug Spires, Armstrong, and Danny Powell, pastor.

Centerville Church, Soso, will hold KingdomFest June 26 beginning at 3p.m. with a children's festival, including games, frog races, face painting, karaoke, a bounce tent, and more. A fried catfish supper will begin at 4 p.m. with a youth praise service in the fellowship hall and a gospel sing in the sanctuary at 6 p.m. The Magnolia Boys, The Southern Psalm, The Abercrombie Family, and The Living Stones will perform. Everyone is invited. For more information, visit www.centervillebaptistchurch.org or call (601) 763-4790.

Church, New Salem Columbus, will have a new Sunday morning schedule for July and August. Sunday School will be at 8:45 a.m. and worship at 10 a.m.

Beulah Church, Inverness, will have an all day singing and lunch June 27 beginning at 7 a.m. The Morphis Family from Lake Village, Ark., will be singing. All are invited.

Church, Hill Oak Meridian, dedicated their new facility June 13. The church is now located at 6201 Highway 493. Oak Hill is the former Oakland Heights Church.

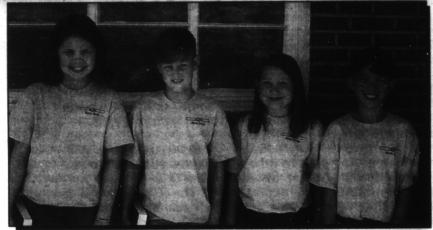
The youth of South Louisville Church, Louisville,

recently participated in Bible Drill. Pictured (from left) are Emily Davis, Betty Cotton, Sanders, Christin leader, Elizabeth Ragan, Whitney Smith, Britni Wright, and Robbie Faulk.

Children of South Louisville Church, Louisville, recently participated in Bible Drills. Pictured (from left) are Madison Mills, Beau Thompson, Jenna Lovorn, and Ryan Humphries. Their leaders were Dinah Smith and Lynn Lovorn.

First Church, Water Valley, will host America We Must Not Forget, a patriotic musical, presented by the Yalobusha Baptist Associational Choir June 26 at 7 p.m. under the direction of Laramie Minga. All are invited.

Pilgrims Rest Church, Crystal Springs, had David Alexander, MBCB, speak to the church June 6 about being missional Christians. This is in preparation for their Great Commission Weekend in July. David Alexander is an MK whose parents still serve in Mexico. Johnnie Stewart is pastor.



South Louisville Children Bible Drill Participants, Louisville



South Louisville Youth Bible Drill Participants, Louisville



Lee, Spires, Armstrong, and Powell, pastor



Acteens of First Church New Albany, New Albany

Homecomings & Revivals

Friendship, McComb: Revival July 9-11; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 6 LaVerne Summerlin, pastor. p.m.; Mack Amis Jr., First,

McComb, evangelist; Randy Carruth, Summit, music leader;

Easthaven, Brookhaven: Revival July 17-21; Sat., 3-5 p.m.; Sunday, 10:30 a.m., lunch at noon, and 6 p.m.;

Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Ernie Sadler and Charles Damper, evangelists; Bill Herman, music, Mon.; Bendon Ginn, pastor; for more information, call (601) 833-2597.

Murphy Creek, Louisville: Revival June 27-30; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; David Sheppard, Harvest Ministries, Laurel, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver, One Way Ministries, Mathiston, music; Walter Simmons, pastor.

Hill, Pleasant Hebron: Revival June 27-30; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; a fellow-

ship meal will follow the Sunday morning service and a homemade ice cream fel-lowship will follow the Wednesday evening service; Gene Douglas, McComb, preacher; Steve Walker, Pinola, music; Lloyd Wilson, pastor; for more information, call (601) 845-6829.

Rocky Creek, Lucedale: Homecoming July 11; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; a covered dish lunch will follow; Q. T. Curtis, Mobile, Ala., speaker; no afternoon services.

Union, Sardis: Revival June 28-July 1; 7 p.m. nightly; Desi evangelist; Don Ginn, brummett, song leader; Robert Hickey, pastor.

Meadowood, Amory: 40th Anniversary August 1; 9:30 a.m.; lunch at noon; Danny Powell, Florence, and former staff, guest speakers; no night services; Lloyd Sweatt, pastor.

www.mbcb.org

CLASSIFIED ADS

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(662) 328-1668, ext. 203. ATTENTION: PASTOR WITH REVIVAL calling, seeking church with same spirit in Central and South Mississippi area to pastor. Interested churches, call Brian Ward at (601) 892-1993.

By Mo Baker

I must confess to being a mediocre gift-giver. Although my intentions are usually noble in giving gifts to others, my methods are not always commendable. I reluctantly admit that some of my giftgiving shortcomings include a lack of creative spontaneity, not discerning what others close to me really desire in a gift, and failing to plan thoroughly for special occasions. As I approach a subject as awesome as spiritual gifts, I am thankful that the Holy Spirit excels in gift-giving. The gifts of the Spirit are always appropriate! Spiritual gifts are referenced in several New Testament pas-

sages. The Bible affirms that the

Holy Spirit is the One who

bestows one or more gifts to

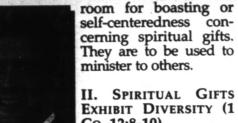
each believer at the moment of

salvation. As we look into God's

Word, we can discover some unique aspects about spiritual gifts.

I. SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE GIVEN FOR A PURPOSE (1 CO. 12:4-7)

The Greek word for gifts (charismata) is similar to the Greek word for grace (charis). Gifts are indicators of God's grace to humanity. Although spiritual gifts come in a variety of forms, they all point to the Holy Spirit as God's agent for the gifts. Spiritual gifts are to be used in service to the Lord as Christians are empowered by God. Every Christian is a recipient of spiritual gifts in order to serve the body of Christ. Misunderstandings regarding spiritual gifts can lead one to a false sense of pride or self-interest. Clearly the Bible teaches that we had nothing to do with the gifts — they are from the heart of God. Consequently, there is no



Carraway

II. SPIRITUAL GIFTS EXHIBIT DIVERSITY (1 Co. 12:8-10) How many spiritual

gifts exist? The biblical

writers never attempted to provide a definitive inventory for readers of Scripture. The prominent New Testament passages that do mention spiritual gifts (i.e., Ro. 12:6-8; 1 Co. 12:8-10, 28-30, and Eph. 4:11) are diverse in their accounting. While Bible scholars may not be certain as to the exact number of spiritual gifts available to believers, one great truth emerges: the Holy Spirit gives unique gifts for a variety of ways to serve others. Peter reminds us, "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (1

Pe. 4:10, NIV). Ministry to others can be demonstrated through outward, obvious gifts, such as preaching

and teaching, or through the use of less noticeable gifts, such as acts of mercy or behind-thescenes deeds of humble service. This writer maintains that the Holy Spirit is free to grant whatever gift is needed at the appropriate time to fulfill God's plan for reaching the world through the church (1 Co. 12:11). The remarkable assortment of spiritual gifts means God has provided the equipping necessary to accomplish His purposes. When believers fail to ascertain their spiritual gifts or neglect to use them appropriately, the work of the church suffers. Have you been spending time discovering and applying your spiritual gifts through the church?

III. SPIRITUAL GIFTS REVEAL UNITY (1 Co. 12:11-15, 20, 27)

Paul underscored the unity of the church through his "body" analogy. The body he spoke of is obviously the body of Christ, those who have been gifted by the Spirit. "The church can be called the body of Christ because it possesses nature of a body" (Grosheide 1980, 292). Just like human body works

because of the harmonious activity of its varied parts, so also does the church when believers exercise their spiritual gifts accordingly. Paul stressed the point with his emphasis on "one body" and "one Spirit" (1 Co. 12: 12-13). The normal function of the human body is for all the organs to cooperate in performing their God-assigned tasks. Were they to compete with each other, the human body would suffer. Similarly, unity of the body of Christ is shown when its various members, regardless of their giftedness, honor one another and help each other fulfill their respective roles.

Scripture testifies that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights..." (Jas. 1:17). The gifts of the Spirit are, indeed, perfect for the work of the kingdom. Though I'll never achieve perfection with my gift-giving, I will have to try a little harder. Got any ideas?

Baker is BSU Director at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Look with Faith 2 Kings 6:8-17, 20-22

By Mary Carraway

Since the war on terrorism began, the word intelligence is used frequently to refer to information gained covertly about the enemy's plans. In this lesson, we see how the king of Aram was constantly thwarted by the knowledge of his plans that Elisha received from the Lord.

SEE GOD AT WORK (2 KINGS 6:

The constant tension between Israel and Aram (Syria) broke out into a series of raids along the northern border. Each time that Aram planned an attack, the Lord revealed the place to Elisha, and he would alert the king of Israel. Time and again, Aram's plans were frustrated. The king of Aram suspected treachery in his own ranks and accused his

officers of treason.

The king had tunnel vision. He never considered the possibility of

supernatural intelligence from the prophet of Israel. The king of Aram did not recognize God at work. We can be guilty of this too. When things are not going just the way we want them to, it is all too easy to look around to find something or someone to blame. Only when we look at every situation with faith can we see that it is God who is always at work in our lives.

SEE GOD'S PRESENCE (2 KINGS 6:13-17)

When the king learned of Elisha's part in the defeat of his plans, he tried to ambush the prophet. The fact that he would try to take Elisha by surprise shows his ignorance of the supernatural origin of Elisha's knowledge. The fact that he assembled a "massive army" to do so shows his ignorance of the power of Elisha's God.

dawn Aramean army with horses and chariots sur-Dothan. rounded Elisha's servant was the first to realize the situa-

Seeing the enemy forces around them, he panicked, rushed to his master, and asked, "What are we to do?"

Doesn't that sound familiar? When surrounded by problems and anxiety, we foolishly attempt to fix the situation using our own strength. Elisha's answer to his servant is the key verse in this passage. "Don't be afraid, for those who are with us outnumber those who are with them."

Then Elisha prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened. For a moment, the veil was lifted to allow him a glimpse of the sover-eignty of God. "The mountain was covered with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

This is an angelic army gathered to protect God's prophet. This is the great host present at Elijah's translation. This is the power and presence of God.

Fire is always the symbol of God's presence. To see God's presence requires eyes of faith. The next time you feel surrounded by an insurmountable enemy, pray that you will have the eyes of faith to recognize the protecting presence of God. It is both a gift of God and a choice we make to see the ordinary give way to the extraordinary.

In the last two years, I have come to know and greatly respect a gentleman who is visually impaired. His ability to "see" amazes me. We can be visually impaired in the circumstances of life, or we can choose to see the unseeable through eyes of faith.

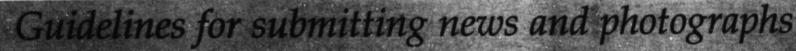
SEE GOD'S MERCY (2 KINGS 6:20-22)

As Elisha had prayed for sight for his servant, he now prayed for blindness for the Aramean army. Totally helpless, they had no choice but to follow the sound

of Elisha's voice as he led them to the city of Samaria. They were enclosed within the city walls and surrounded by the Israelite army. The battle was won without a single bow or sword being Elisha had several drawn. options, to leave them blind or captive or slaughtered. The king wished to kill them. Instead Elisha chose to show mercy, not vengeance. Not only did he ask God to return their sight, but he also instructed the king to feed them. Eating together constituted making a covenant of peace, and for a while "the bands from Aram stopped raiding Israel's territory."

Once again we see the tender heart of Elisha, but more importantly, we see a powerful demonstration of mercy which is the very nature of God. Blinded by sin and its destructiveness, we are still offered a "table in the presence of our enemies" to partake of the mercy and forgiveness by God.

Carraway is member of First Church, Wiggins.



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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Encouraged by Enduring Love Lamentations 3:19-24; Luke 19:1-10

By Mo Baker

Mark Twain is credited with saying, I can live for three months off of one good compliment. Whether that's true or not is anyones guess, but the idea behind it reveals a significant truth: people thrive on encouragement. The Christian community is no different. God's Word offers tremendous encouragement to believers, enabling us to live abundantly for Him. The current study theme will help us discover certain Bible truths regarding God's eternal love, assurance of salvation, believers usefulness in kingdom service, and joyful hope in God. Let's begin by examining the encouragement that is ours because of God's enduring love.

God's LOVE BECAUSE ENCOURAGING ALWAYS ENDURES (La. 3:19-24).

The writer of Lamentations (presumably Jeremiah) expressed his deep sadness over the situation encompassing the people of Judah. The Babylonians had over-

thrown the city of Jerusalem, destroying the temple and forcing the Jewish people into exile. The dismal state of affairs surrounding Jeremiah caused him to grieve over all that both he and God's people had lost. Such gloominess notwithstanding, Jeremiah was able to express paradoxically a measure of hope for the future because of God's eternal love. The basis for his hope was in God's great love (La. 3:22). The Hebrew word used was hesed, sometimes translated as covenant love or loyal love, and usually carries the meaning of loyalty or faithfulness, particularly in the covenant initiated by God (Huey 1993, 473). Additionally, the term implies obligations to family members, friends, and others.

Jeremiahs encouragement also stemmed from God's unfailing



compassions, or acts of tender love, that are experienced in new ways each day. Recalling God's great love led Jeremiah to be encouraged further by God's faithfulness (La. 3:24), a thought that expressed the constancy and relia-bility of God. Jeremiah was beginning to under-

stand that God had been faithful to destroy His rebellious people and that He would also restore them in the future. In our contemporary world of short-term commitments and superficial relationships paraded on reality TV shows, Christians can also be encouraged by the reliability of God's faithful love!

God's LOVE **ENCOURAGING BECAUSE IT PURSUES** SINFUL PEOPLE (LK. 19:1-7).

Luke's narrative of the life of Jesus substantiates that He was on a mission to do God's will. Although He was on His way to Jerusalem and the cross, Jesus was never too busy or preoccupied to touch individuals with God's love, especially the outcasts of society. One such person

was Zacchaeus, the tax collector. Little is known about Zacchaeus, for his story only appears in the New Testament here in Luke. He worked for the Roman government collecting taxes and became quite wealthy, apparently by dishonest means. Even though Zacchaeus climbed up a tree to gain a view of Jesus, the biblical reference validates that Jesus was actually the one pursuing Zacchaeus. Jesus called Zacchaeus by name, commanding him to climb down from the tree for a dinner appointment in his home. Luke describes Zacchaeus as obeying Jesus immediately and welcoming Jesus willingly into his home. Despite the murmurings of the crowd, Jesus was concerned about the salvation of a single sinner. From Luke's account we can discern that Jesus is aware of every individual and seeks a love relationship with each person, regardless of what their lifestyles are like. What great encouragement comes from the relentless love of God!

God's LOVE ENCOURAGING BECAUSE IT CHANGES LIVES (LK. 19:8-10).

The meeting between Jesus and Zacchaeus was so significant that transformed Zacchaeus life. Almost immediately Zacchaeus is convicted of his sinful lifestyle and is changed by God's love. The statement, I give half of my posses-sions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount (Lk. 19:8) is best regarded as a futuristic present, implying that from that moment on, Zacchaeus intended to show evidence of his changed heart by being exceedingly generous. Jesus responded by affirming Zacchaeus salvation, exhibited by his repentant attitude toward the Savior. The closing sentence in this narrative is profound, as it testifies to Jesus earthly ministry of pursuing and saving the lost (Lk. 19:10).

God's Word has a contempo-

rary message to people living today. Jesus can change your life by His amazing love. The transforming love of God is seeking constantly those in need of a fresh start, and God's transforming love will never expire. Now, that's encouraging!

Baker is BSU Director at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Respond to God's Direction

2 Kings 8-10

By Mary Carraway

Listening to eulogies for President Reagan, reminded us of our nation's mission, to be "a city on a hill," a nation founded with devotion to God. Israel also had this mission, but was not always true to it. In Israel's long history of disobedience, there was always a remnant, those few who were obedient, courageous, and public in response to God's direction.

The mercy that Elisha had shown to the Aramean army resulted in temporary peace. Then Ben-Hadad, king of Aram, mounted an all-out attack and laid seige to Samaria causing a famine so severe that it resulted in exorbitant prices for undesirable food and even cannibalism. The end of this seige, foretold by Elisha, was lifted not by military might but by the Spirit of the Lord.

Even with miraculous intervention in a time of dire need, the king and the people of Israel did not turn from

their apostasy to recognize the providence of God. God's future discipline can be understood in the light of this rejection.

2 KINGS 8:1-6

One of the means God used to call Israel back to Him was famine. Elisha predicted seven years of famine in Israel. Even when God disciplined the nation as a whole, he cared for individuals faithful to Him. Elisha advised the good Shunammite woman to take her household anywhere but Israel. Once again she responded with faith to the word of God through Elisha and obediently moved her family to the land of the Philistines.

Obedience can be costly.

During this time, her property was confiscated by the king. Later God honored her obedience by restoring her property just as He had once honored her faith by restoring her son.

2 KINGS 8:7-15

God also used foreign nations to discipline His

Elisha traveled to people. Damascus and met Hazael who he prophesied would be the future king of Aram. This encounter was heart-breaking for Elisha who wept as he looked into the eyes of the man whose reign of terror would bring much pain and grief to Israel. It may seem strange that a prophet of Israel would foretell the coming king of Aram until we understand that God's sovereignty extends to all nations.

2 KINGS 8:16-29

Carraway

At this point, it becomes hard to tell the players without a program. What is important is that, for a while, the kings of both Israel and Judah were the son, son-in-law, and grandson of Ahab and Jezebel whose names are synonymous with evil, depravity, and Baal worship. God had already determined to destroy the dynasty of Ahab (1 Kings 21:21). Now he was ready to raise up a man to do this.

2 KINGS 9:1-10

Jehu was the army commander whom God had chosen to utterly destroy the house of Ahab. Elisha sent a young prophet to anoint him king of Israel. He advised the young man to tuck his cloak into his belt and be ready to run for his life, for this commission was fraught with danger. To anoint Jehu king while Joram was still in power amounted to conspiracy to overthrow the government.

Sometimes responding to God's direction requires courage, and the young prophet was equal to the task. He anointed Jehu with the flask of oil and commissioned him to be God's instrument of judgment against the dynasty of Ahab.

2 KINGS 9:11-10:36

When Jehu returned to his fellow officers, they asked him why

this "madman" had come to him. Jehu at first replied that it was nothing, but at the officers' insistence, he told them the truth.
"This is what the LORD says: I anoint you king over Israel.

They were forced to decide whether their loyalty lay with Joram, the king, or Jehu. The choice was between accepting or rejecting the word of God as pro-claimed by a prophet of God. If we receive direction from God, we must respond in a visible fashion if appropriate. Jehu's fellow officers openly and visibly demonstrated their response to the announced plan of God. They spread their cloaks on the bare steps as an act of submission, blew the trumpet, and shouted, "Jehu is king!"

Jehu became God's avenger

by executing every living rela-tive of Ahab including Jezebel and destroying Baal worship. However, this did not cause Israel to turn from its sinful ways, and the Lord began to reduce the size of Israel.

Carraway is member of First Church, Wiggins.

Guidelines for submitting news and photograp

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish ews and photographs of special events

news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing, no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an email form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

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Motions set record at Indianapolis meeting

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Messengers proposed a record 29 motions on the opening day of the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) encompassing issues as heated as changing the name of the SBC and as innocu-

ous as officially commending a family friendly movie soon to be released by the Walt Disney Company.

A motion by Claude Thomas, pastor of First Church of Euless, Texas, asking the convention to appoint a committee to

examine changing the name of the SBC, produced a spirited debate. Messengers voted 55-45% against establishing a name-change committee.

Nancy Shaeffer, a member of Ebenezer Church of Toccoa, Ga., introduced a motion to develop a partnership between the SBC's North American Mission Board (NAMB) and Child Evangelism Fellowship to place Good News Clubs in public elementary schools.

Schaeffer urged the development of such clubs "while the window of opportunity" is open. She said Southern Baptist churches should consider adopting elementary schools for the purpose of evangelizing and disciplining the children of America.

The motion referred to NAMB.

Stephen Parks, a messenger from First Church of Lufkin, Texas, moved to have a portion of the SBC's annual meeting in 2007 devoted to a procelebrating the 300th anniversary of the rise of associations within the Baptist denominations.

Parks' motion further asked the SBC to produce materials and events in 2007 celebrating the anniversary of associations, which became a part of the Baptist denomination in America in 1707 with the founding of the Philadelphia Association. Parks serves as director of missions for the Unity Baptist Association.

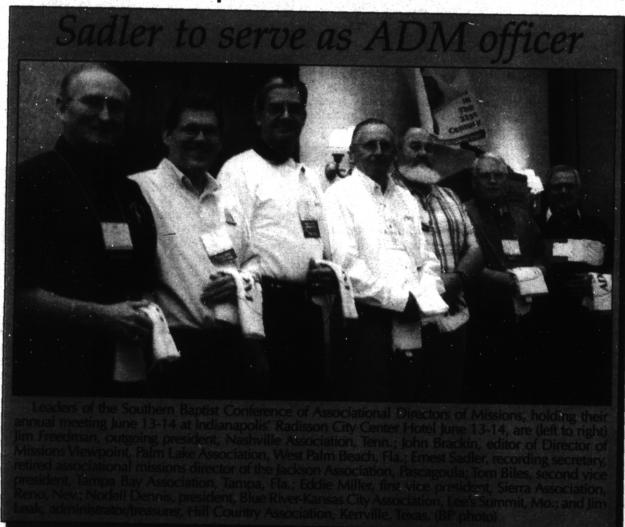
The motion was referred to NAMB. Bob Casey, a messenger from Parkview Baptist Church in Gainesville, Fla., moved that the convention amend its bylaws to reflect the most recent version of parliamentary procedures outlines in an updated version of Robert's Rules of Order. The present language in

Bylaw 11 was approved in 1964. The motion was referred to the SBC Executive Committee.

Ed Ethridge of MacArthur Boulevard Church in Irving, Texas, asked the SBC to reaffirm its "absolute dependence upon the Holy Bible as the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God," and that the denomination establish 2005 as Southern Baptist Year of the Bible. Ethridge further moved to have the SBC call on all members of its churches to read through the Bible in 2005 and asked that LifeWay Christian Resources create materials "to assist the Church [in its] vital role of fulfilling the Great Commission."

The motion was referred to LifeWay. Phillip Brunner of Main Street Church in Alexandria, Ky., moved that the Executive Committee undertake a study to determine how single adults are being evangelized and ministered to by convention entities.

More information on the motions can be obtained at http://www.sbcbaptistpress.org/bpnews.asp?ID=18491.



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NYLD AQRX ZLATA TONK NYLV, R CRBB QAW IKT KDL NYRDP; RA RN BQC-STB KD NYL AQEEQNY XQIA NK XK PKKX, KF NK XK LGRB? NK AQGL BRSL, KF NK XLANFKI RN? BTWL ARH: DRDL

Clue: Y = HHave fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John 5:36

Messengers to the 2004 Southern Baptist Convention, meeting June Indianapolis, c meeting 15-16 called increased Christian influence on American culture, but stopped short of issuing a declaration against public school education

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)

in resolutions adopted June 16. In the morning session, messengers approved eight resolutions in unanimous or nearly unanimous votes. The resolutions:

 Urged Southern Baptists to repent for their part in the secularization of society and called on Christians to "engage the culture by speaking the truth in love."

 Encouraged Christians to fulfill their biblical responsibility as American citizens, including voting according to scriptural values

Called for ratification of an amendment to the United States Constitution that would define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

 Thanked the members of the U.S. Armed Forces and urged prayer for their safety.

• Expressed appreciation for the life and presidency of Ronald Reagan, the country's 40th president who died June 5.

Gave honor to God for the conservative resurgence that began 25 years before and thanked those who led it.

Messengers debate, approve eight resolutions Reiterated Southern Baptists' reliance upon a Godinspired Bible and commended LifeWay Christian Resources for completion of the Holman Christian Standard Bible.

Expressed appreciation to the people of Indianapolis, the Southern Baptists of the area, as well as all others involved in the proceedings of the annual meeting.

The Resolutions Committee chose not to recommend to messengers any of six proposals on education, including one that garnered much pre-convention T.C. attention. Pinckney of Alexandria, Va., and Bruce Shortt of Spring, Texas, had circulated a resolution urging Southern Baptists to "remove their children from ...government schools.

When his resolution was not reported out by the committee, Pinckney, a former SBC second vice president, attempted to address the issue with an amendment from the floor. He proposed an addition to the resolution on secularization of the culture that stopped short of calling for a Christian exodus from public schools but called for Southern Baptists to give their children a "thoroughly Christian education."

His amendment described a thorough Christian education as "home schooling, truly Christian private schools or some other innovative model of private Christian education." It also urged churches and pastors to equip parents "to pro-vide their children with a thoroughly Christian education."

After supporters and opponents addressed Pinckney's amendment from the floor, messengers voted it down overwhelmingly.

In speaking for his amendment, Pinckney told messengers there is an abundance of evidence "government schools are becoming more and more anti-Christian," though he acknowledged "many differences from one public school to another." He commended Christians teaching and working in public schools.

response, Wittman, Resolutions Committee chairman, expressed opposition, telling messengers the convention had passed 11 resolutions on education in the last 19 years, pronouncing its support for public, private and home schooling. In a statement issued later, Wittman said, "Southern Baptists have spo-ken to this issue sufficiently, and it does not need to be readdressed."

The committee believes "this is a responsibility that God has given to the parents of each individual child, and we

encourage parents to exercise that God-given responsibility over their children," said Wittman, pastor of Applewood Church in Wheat Ridge, Colo., to the messengers. "We must be careful as a denomination not to usurp the authority that God has placed firmly in the home." He told reporters later: "The

real issue here is not whether we are for Christian education or against public education. The real issue is, Where does the responsibility lie?'

Five of the 10 members of the committee have been involved in home schooling, so the panel's unanimous opposition to the Pinckney-Shortt resolution was "by no way" opposi-tion to home schooling, Wittman said. The committee weighed the resolution "in great detail with extensive deliberation and prayer," he said.

In its statement, the committee also quoted SBC President Jack Graham, whose term ended at this year's annual meeting, in recent interviews. "Southern Baptists are concerned about the direction of some public schools," Graham said. "But on the other hand many of our best people —adminis-trators, teachers, coaches are Southern Baptists working within the public school system all around America."

